

A G E N D A



Thursday, September 27, 2007

Item(s) to Set Public Hearing(s)
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Item No. 65

Subject: Set a public hearing to consider an ordinance amending Section 25-12-113 and Section 25-12-114 (Electrical Code) of the City Code regarding special inspections, homestead permits, and the installation of type Metal Clad (MC) Cable. (Suggested date and time: October 18 2007, 6:00 p.m., at Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second Street, Austin, TX.)

Fiscal Note: There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

For More Information: Leon Barba 974-7254; Dan McNabb, 974-2752

Boards and Commission Action: Recommended by the Electric Board.

Prior Council Action: Adoption of the 2005 National Electrical Code and local amendments on December 15, 2005.

Type MC cable is a conduit system that saves labor and material cost because it is a flexible wiring system that can be installed in most commercial applications. Over time, City staff recognized that Metal Clad (MC) cable was being utilized in a manner that was inconsistent with industry standards and determined a need for uniform installation procedures. As a result, the 2005 National Electric Code (NEC) was modified to include "uses permitted" and was subsequently adopted by the City in 2006. Based on additional feedback from the Electric Board, industry representatives and City staff, this item serves to further clarify those standards adopted in 2006. Amendments will include illustrated drawings and language that will streamline installation practices. Staff will also include a clarification of "workman-like" standards for MC Cable which will address safety concerns associated with current installations and at the same time, reduce failed inspections that have resulted from the more general language on MC Cable installation standards.

In addition, the proposed amendments add:

1. A Special Inspections Program which the building official may establish, by rule, for the installation of certain electrical components in one and two family dwellings within the zoning jurisdiction of the City. Under the program, the building official shall inspect work performed under one out of five of the applications submitted. The special inspection program may apply to the installation of electrical equipment associated with:
 - a) installation of HVAC equipment, with or without ductwork, in a building or section of a building that was previously not served by an HVAC system;
 - b) replacement of a complete existing central heat and air system with or without ductwork;
 - c) replacement of or the addition to an existing unit of four or more supply or return duct runs; or
 - d) replacement of any existing self contained packaged units.
2. A Homestead Permit which includes revised regulations that provide assurance for additional code-related Life Safety requirements for all homeowners. For example, the "service " installation portion of an electrical system has been removed from the "Homeowners" permit. Homeowners can now only install basic wiring which decreases the possibility of electrocution due to the complexity of the installation of an electrical system.